

## President's Message

August 28, 2025

Dave Westwood, DFA President

Good morning, everyone. Let me offer a quick update on two key decisions reached at this morning's DFA Executive Committee meeting.

The Executive Committee agreed with the recommendation of the DFA Bargaining Team to reiterate our demand to the Board to return to the bargaining table immediately to resume negotiations. The following motion was approved (unanimous, with one abstention):

*"The Executive Committee recommends that the Bargaining Team returns to the bargaining table as soon as possible to discuss a revised Board offer with a fresh mandate that substantively addresses all the proposals in the DFA's last package." (M. Numer/D. Silvio) CARRIED*

As a second order of business, the Executive Committee approved a motion to file a bargaining complaint with the Department of Labour based on the Board's use of public messages to bargain directly with DFA Members and to circumvent bargaining at the table through appropriate channels. Further, the Board deliberately misrepresented their "offer" in their messaging, omitting the key detail that their proposal on interest arbitration required the DFA to abandon all unresolved proposals except wages. We will request that the Minister order the Board of Governors to return to the bargaining table and avoid further undermining the integrity of the collective bargaining process and delaying the resolution of the situation.

*"The Executive Committee approves the filing of a bargaining complaint with the Department of Labour against the Dalhousie Board of Governors." (D. Silvio/R. Bejan) CARRIED*

The Board continues to use a variety of tactics and strategies to attempt to conclude a new collective agreement without engaging with us at the bargaining table. They applied for conciliation after four bargaining sessions, and cancelled agreed dates for bargaining. They demanded the conciliation officer issue a 'no board report' at the earliest opportunity, despite failing to engage in meaningful negotiation at the table. They have left meetings early and failed to respond to DFA counterproposals on more than one occasion. They continue to use public messages to pressure DFA Members to accept their offer, and they



have failed to disclose key details in those messages. Their “offer” to refer the issue of wages (and only wages, to be clear) to interest arbitration was not made at the table.

Bargaining at the table can happen very quickly, but it does require that the Board actually come to the table and negotiate. Initiating a lockout and then refusing to meet to negotiate is not only disrespectful to DFA Members, but creates a huge amount of uncertainty and stress while doing little to facilitate the conclusion of a new agreement that both sides find acceptable.

We are equal partners in this relationship, but the Board continues to act as though their needs, priorities, and timelines are more important than ours. I hope you will join me in raising your voice and telling the Board of Governors in no uncertain terms that deals are made at the table, and if they want to minimize further disruptions to the Fall Semester then they had better start joining us at the table.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dave Westwood', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dave Westwood  
DFA President, 2025-2026